



SPEAK UP WHEN YOU'RE DOWN

AN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
OF THE WASHINGTON STATE
POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION
AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

SB 5898

MAY 2005 – JUNE 2006

*Submitted by
The Washington Council for Prevention of Child Abuse & Neglect
September 2006
www.speakup.wa.gov*



“Women need to understand that postpartum depression is real and it is common.

They need to know they are not alone.

Even the most well-educated, mentally balanced woman can experience this painful illness.”

-Mary Yglesia
Director of Midwife Education
Seattle Midwifery School

Executive Summary

RCW 43.121.160

Postpartum depression-- Public information and communication outreach campaign.

The council shall conduct a proactive, public information and communication outreach campaign concerning the significance, signs, and treatment of postpartum depression.

The public information campaign may, within available funds, include production and distribution of a brochure and communication by electronic media, telephone hotlines, and existing parenting education events funded by the council.

NOTES:

Finding -- 2005 c 347:

"The legislature finds that postpartum depression is a serious condition that affects women of all ages, economic status, and racial and ethnic backgrounds.

Postpartum depression includes a range of physical and emotional changes that many mothers can have following the birth of a child, which can be treated with medication and counseling.

If untreated, however, postpartum depression can lead to further depression, self-destructive behavior, or even suicide, as well as child abuse, neglect, or death of the infant or other siblings."

In May 2005, Washington State passed Senate Bill 5898 to provide a public awareness campaign to educate women and their families about the signs, symptoms and treatment options of postpartum depression (PPD), a condition affecting as many as 1 in 8 Washington women that carries serious implications not only for them but for their children as well. The impetus for the legislation was preventative. In adopting this legislation, sponsors understood that the greatest barriers to effective diagnosis and treatment of PPD were a lack of public awareness combined with insufficient progress related to early detection and intervention. Responsibility for the campaign was assigned to the Washington Council for Prevention of Child Abuse & Neglect (WCPCAN).

Under WCPCAN's leadership, a broad group of stakeholders was convened to advise regarding effective strategies for raising awareness of PPD and its risks, and to commit to specific roles each could play in leveraging the \$25,000 campaign allocation for greatest impact. Based on these shared commitments, the "Speak Up When You're Down" campaign accomplished remarkable results.

Among the accomplishments achieved during the July 2005 – June 2006 campaign period were:

- **A toll-free PPD 'warm line'** staffed by trained volunteers
- **An information rich website**, www.speakup.wa.gov, with links to helpful resources
- **Brochures in English & Spanish and full color posters** utilizing artwork provided free of charge by the state of New Jersey
- **Distribution of 200,000 brochures statewide**, including:
 - **116,000** through the Department of Health's CHILD Profile system, ensuring that 86% of all families in Washington receive the materials within the first postpartum month
 - **80,000** through the Economic Services Administration (ESA) –to provide 80,000 multi-language brochures to their clients, and **4,000** to health care professionals serving women pre- and post-partum (OB/GYN's, pediatricians, midwives, doulas, breastfeeding support providers,

Executive Summary, cont.

- **Media kits** including fact sheets, press releases and articles for use newsletters
- **Media coverage** by KOMO TV.com, Q13.com, the Seattle PI, ParentMap, Seattle Woman, Nation's Health and others
- **Over 50 presentations to key audiences**, including the WA Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the WA State Nurses Association, early childhood education providers, expectant fathers, teen parents, parents in recovery, social workers, midwives, public health nurses, home visitors and others
- **In kind support valued at \$44,750.** Every state dollar invested in the campaign leveraged \$1.79 in other public and private contributions.

WCPCAN continues to lead the *Speak Up When You're Down* collaborative in seeking ways to continue the campaign beyond the funding period.

Continuing support comes from committed partners, Postpartum Support International of Washington, Public Health Seattle King County and the Tacoma Pierce County Health Department, the University of Washington School of Nursing/Center on Infant Mental Health, Parent Trust for Washington Children, the King County Children & Family Commission, Children's Home Society of Washington, the Washington State Academy of Pediatrics, WithinReach, the Community Birth & Family Center, the Washington State Department of Health, and community volunteers.

The Washington State campaign committed to addressing PPD in ways that would inform, inspire and impact the future health of women, children and their families.

Washington is one of only a handful of states to legislatively recognize the importance of "speaking up" about postpartum depression.

WCPCAN and its partners have been proud to lead this pioneering effort to bring greater awareness, diagnosis, treatment and community support to women and families affected by PPD in Washington State.



We gratefully acknowledge the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services and the Division of Family Health Services for use of the “Speak up When You’re Down” postpartum depression campaign in Washington.



To request a full report, please contact:

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